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School Committee Minutes 04/28/2009

Approved by School Committee May 26, 2009

**THE ARLINGTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2009
7:30 P.M.**

Present: Joe Curran, Chair, Denise Burns, Vice Chair
Joe Curro, Secretary, Leba Heigham
Cindy Starks, Ronald Spangler

Interim Superintendent: Kathleen Bodie
Chief Financial Officer: Sue Mazarella
Special Education Director: Mark Ryder

Absent: Jeff Thielman
Student Reps

Ms. Burns exited the meeting at 9:43 p.m. and returned at 9:58 p.m.
Mr. Ryder exited the meeting at 9:55 p.m. and returned at 10:00 p.m.
Mr. Curran exited the meeting at 10:00 p.m. and returned at 10:04 p.m.
Ms. Mazarella exited the meeting 10:30 p.m. and returned at 10:35 p.m.
Ms. Mazarella and Mr. Ryder exited meeting 10:55 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

APPROVAL OF 2009 - 2010 SCHOOL CALENDAR

After a brief discussion on the actual contents to be included on the school calendar such as time of dismissal before Thanksgiving break and conference dates for the middle school and high school, which are as yet to be determined, the committee confirmed with the policy manual what they needed to approve and took the following vote:

Ms. Burns moved for approval of 2009 - 2010 School Calendar, seconded by Mr. Spangler.
Voted 6-0

Due to the Public Hearing scheduled for 8:00 and being 7:40 p.m. it was recommended to move and hear agenda item: Superintendent Report

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Dr. Bodie reported on the events held this week in honor of the dignitaries, teachers, students and parents from our Sister City of Nagaokakyo, Japan.

Dr. Bodie congratulated Ramanjit Singh for excellent performance on the MAML level 2 exam.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Bodie announced the Dallin Principal Search Committee will be headed by Bishop School Principal Steve Carme and will hold its first meeting on Monday, May 4th.

Dr. Bodie briefed the committee that the new PC computers have been installed in the Hardy computer lab and ten of the working Mac computers from the Hardy lab were donated to the BIP program at Arlington High School. The Peirce will be the last elementary school to have new PCs installed later in the summer.

Dr. Bodie was proud to announce that once again the Arlington Public Schools and the community have been awarded \$30,000 from The George and Elizabeth L. Sanborn Foundation for the 2009- 2010 school year to support our cancer prevention efforts.

*Dr. Bodie discussed the recommendation of Mr. Skidmore regarding the need at the high school for a transitional counselor to serve students at risk who may be suffering socially, emotionally, or academically and to provide substance use/abuse reduction assessment and services to identified students. Dr Bodie asked the committee to approve the following job description **of a Transitional Education Program Coordinator/Counselor and Substance Abuse Assessment Specialist.***

Dr. Bodie noted the position would be cost neutral by trading other positions and noted that large caseloads handled by the current guidance staff and social workers warrant this position.

Mr. Spangler moved to approve the job description of Transitional Education Program Coordinator/Counselor and Substance Abuse Assessment Specialist, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Vote 5 - 1, Ms. Burns voting No

It was recommended to suspend the Superintendent Report and go Public Hearing FY 10 School Budget agenda item.

PUBLIC HEARING ON FY 10 BUDGET

Interim Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Bodie summarized the FY 10 Budget and presented the administration's suggestions on reductions in various tiers. Dr. Bodie stated that the School Committee needs to decide what cuts are to be made and offer suggestions to meet the deficit amount.

§ *Jim Dinaro, a Dallin parent, urged the School Committee and Superintendent to keep three sections next year for the fifth graders.*

§ *Julie Brazile, a high school parent, suggested more discussion on the process, and requested more details on the cuts.*

§ *Helene Ragovin James, a Peirce parent, requested that more information be provided to parents and questioned if there was a contingency plan in place.*

§ *Sheila O'Brien Jones, a Dallin parent, asked the School Committee and Superintendent to put the Dallin last on the list for eliminating any classroom teachers.*

§ *Caitlin Thom, a Dallin and middle school parent, would like more clarification on the impact of all the cuts and the effect on the children.*

§ *Jennifer Parker, a middle school parent, requested additional information on the budgets.*

§ *Martha Scott, a Town Meeting member and parent Arlington Public School graduates, questioned the Fee/Revenue/Offsets section of the FY 10 Budget Projections and noted that communication on the budget has not changed in over 25 years.*

§ *Barbara Goodman believes the Committee should discuss the impact of the cuts to the budget and to continue to keep the public informed.*

§ *Joe Connors, a Finance Committee member, suggested that the School Committee meet at various locations within town to be more accessible to the public.*

SCHOOL COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ON FY 10 BUDGET

Dr. Bodie and School Committee members acknowledged to the public that each person was heard tonight. The request made by many to show the impact of the cuts to the FY 10 Budget will be fulfilled in writing.

Committee members continued the Budget discussion. A list of concerns on the budget, fees and line items from each School Committee member was made. Ms. Mazzarella, CFO and Interim Superintendent Dr. Bodie answered members' questions.

All Budget FY 10 materials that were presented can be found on the School Committee website:

- § Revenue Projections
- § Salary & Staffing Detail
- § Expense Detail
- § Out of District Tuition and Transportation
- § Homeless & Group Home Expense
- § Financial Tie Out

The reductions that have been suggested from the administration team are in no particular order.

Ms. Burns surveyed the audience and discovered that most of the public receives school information from the Arlington Advocate and the website.

Dr. Bodie had inquired of the committee as to whether another meeting was needed before the Budget FY 10 is presented to the Finance Committee on Saturday, May 9, 2009. After a brief discussion among School Committee members and with Mr. Fanning of the Finance Committee, it was agreed that no meeting was needed.

Mr. Spangler moved that the Arlington School Committee adopt the proposed Fiscal Year 2010 Budget consisting of Operating Revenue from Town of \$37,476,597; ARRA money: State Fiscal Stabilization \$414,028; FY 10 IDEA & Pre K Funding \$749,327; Grant Revenue \$ 2,678,556; Revenue & Fee Revenue \$3,898,250; Additional Revenue from Special Education Cost Savings of \$400,000; Foreign Students \$100,000; LABBB Revenue \$250,000; and Custodial Reduction of \$75,000; and to add Educational Investments from .04 Elementary Gifted & Talented and .05 Middle School Inclusion Facilitator of \$48,846, with the recommended Budget Reductions totaling (\$551,872), Seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Roll Call: Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Curro Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, and Ms. Starks Yes

Vote 6-0 unanimous

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT CONTINUED

Interim Superintendent Dr. Bodie continued her Superintendent Report by discussing the AYCC report on changes to support services for regular education student's next school year.

The committee discussed the changes and it was recommended to post this document to the website and included more detail at the elementary level.

ROUNDTABLE (Tabled to next School Committee meeting)

- § Committee Request
- § Individual member reports on liaison schools, subcommittee and appointment work
- § Individual member new business

SECRETARY REPORT

Mr. Curro reported on all correspondence received.

CONSENT AGENDA all items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

**** Approval of Warrant # 09144 in the amount of \$ 548,800.54 dated April 14, 2009***

Mr. Curro moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Ms. Burns.

Vote 6:0

EXECUTIVE SESSION

10:50 - 11:30 p.m.

Ms. Burns moved to enter Executive Session at 10:50 p.m. to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with non-union personnel, and to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with non-union personnel and only to exit Executive Session for the purpose of adjourning, seconded by Mr. Curro.

Roll Call: Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Curro Yes, Ms. Burns Yes, Mr. Curran Yes, Mr. Spangler Yes, and Ms. Starks Yes

Vote 6:0 unanimous

Ms. Mazzarella and Mr. Ryder exited the meeting at 10:55 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Ms. Heigham it was motioned to Adjourn at 11:30 p.m., seconded by Mr. Spangler.

Vote 6-0

***Respectfully submitted by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/jc***